1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
FF52 Nupe FF52

562 837 831 sexual licence towards which the other social forces appear to be driving. The result is the close association between professional female trade and semi-professional licensed prostitution which we can observe to-day.

562 837 831 842 Yet admission into this 'domain' was in turn made dependent upon a certain qualification, namely childlessness. Here we can add a final, ideological motive to the social causes behind the moral development. It is embodied in the Nupe conception of barrenness as a state outside conventional morality, and its contribution is twofold: it helps to define more narrowly the group in which sexual licence shall be sanctioned, by making sterility of the women a criterion of admission; and it provides at the same time the spiritual framework for such social sanction, by linking it with certain religious or quasi-religious beliefs. To some extent the ideological association between barrenness and sexual licence can be reduced to certain obvious rational motives, which are, in fact, present in the minds of the people: childlessness is of great advantage in the life of the women traders whose profession involves constant travelling and long absence from home; moreover, the sexual indiscretions of sterile women are socially of less consequence than those of other women, being comparatively safe from discovery and precluding the more disturbing legal complications (i.e. birth of illegitimate children). But the social interpretation of barrenness also expresses certain more deeply [581] rooted beliefs. To the Nupe marriage has no real meaning without progeny. Barrenness is regarded as a great curse and misfortune, and many cults and forms of magic are designed to secure fertility of the women or to cure barrenness. Traditional religious beliefs place barren women in a category apart and exclude them from participation in the most important annual cult of the country, the *gunnu*.[1] As the barren woman fails by the common standard of marriage and womanhood, she is also exempted from the standards of common morality. Adultery and unchastity count less in her than in other women. And although the stigma of immorality would still attach to the unchaste barren woman (she would still be called a 'worthless woman'), it would be, as it were, overshadowed by and fused with the other paramount stigma of barrenness itself.

The growth of sexual licence far beyond its traditionally sanctioned limits is again due to various causes, economic, political, and religious. The primary cause appears to be economic and will be discussed in that context. Its effectiveness, however, is greatly strengthened by the political and social factors which foster what I have termed the 'double morality' in Nupe society. We can also see that the Nupe conception of barrenness must itself indirectly aid these tendencies and defeat the limitations which it was meant to uphold. For in a country with spreading sterility and even birth restriction, a religion which withholds its sanctions of matrimonial morality in the case of childless women can prove but a weak bulwark against the tide of sexual licence. Mohammedanism in Nupe, committed as it is to that 'double morality', undermines rather than supplies forces of moral restraint.

[1] For a description of this aspect of barrenness see *J.R.A.I.* 1937, p. iii.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922
FF52 Nupe FF52

586 A woman may equally divorce her husband for crime, or she may get special permission from the Court to marry someone else, if he consents, for the period for which her husband is imprisoned. She cannot obtain divorce on any other ground except that of desertion for three years, or failure to keep her. A man can obtain it for other causes, but rarely does so without good cause, for he loses all the dower money he has paid for his wife. Remarriage is permitted to both sexes after a three months' interval.

581 764 Marriage plays an important part in the social life of the Nupe and is *de rigueur* for both sexes. Until a man has married a virgin with due ceremony, he is accounted a nobody and his fellows will neither speak with him nor listen to him. No one will bury an unmarried woman, even though she be a widow. After much delay this degrading duty devolved upon the dogarai, and now upon Government labourers.

584 The would-be bridegroom calls three times upon the girl's parents, each time bringing with him some small present for the father, mother and girl, and then makes known his intentions. The girl's consent has to be obtained, and the parents generally tell him to go and ask her, without mentioning that he has been first to them. If she agrees she tells him to go to her people and thus it is arranged. Indeed it is sometimes she who first suggests to her father whom she would like to marry and he takes the necessary steps. The engagement is formally recognised when the suitor gives 12s. 6d. in money and two calabashes of kola nuts to the father, and 7s. 6d. in money and one calabash of 583 kola nuts to the mother, for them to distribute amongst the 584 male and female members of their family respectively. From this time on the pretendant must work on his father-in-law's farm or house, together with his friends, two or three times a year, and every big Salla he gives to his bride 5s. worth of clothes and 2s. to plait her hair. This may last for some years, as a boy may be betrothed at the age of ten or twelve and a girl at five or seven. These early engagements are, however, considered undesirable, and the yearly cost to the groom effectually tends to discourage them. A careful count is kept of all that he gives, so that it may be returned if the girl should ultimately refuse to consummate the marriage. Once they are engaged the boy [574] and girl may not play together, which up to the time of marriage they may do with anyone else. In fact a boy and girl may declare themselves "saranchi," or great friends, and they are allowed to go to each other's houses until one or other of them marries.

585 When the time for consummating a marriage has come the groom gives his wife three cloths and a handkerchief, at a minimum value of 30s., and if she does not like those he has selected, she returns them and he must send others till she is satisfied. At the same time he gives her parents £2 10s., which they spend on

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922
FF52 Nupe FF52

853 787 This is tested by an ant (chinaka) being placed therein, and if it drowns the child is given to a wet-nurse and the mother is medically treated. This custom is particularly prevalent amongst riverain Nupe.

855 543 Subsequent children are thoroughly spoilt until they reach the age of three or four years when, amongst the well-to-do, at all events, the mother is thought to be too fond to make a good guardian. Girls are usually weaned at the age of three years, [843] boys not until they are four. The children may, therefore, be 855 sent right away to a boarding school for some ten years, or 874 the relations may take them to a day school, arranging their 593 marriages, and in fact divorcing them so entirely from their own parents that the only connection left is inheritance. If the grandfather is alive he distributes the children amongst their uncles and aunts on the male side, generally in order of seniority. They call them father and mother, and when grown-up would visit them and give them money before going to their true parents. The foster-parents would equally go to their foster children for support in their old age, and only to their own children in the last resort.

874 A successful Mallam will have a school containing fifty or sixty children, amongst whom he keeps up a rigid discipline by means of the rod, and if a child attempts to run away it is put into leg-irons. There are whole holidays on Thursdays and Fridays, but on working days the hours are 4 to 6 and 7 to 11 a.m., and 2 to 4 and 7 to 8 p.m. Day scholars miss the first two hours. The children learn the Koran, and reading and writing in Arabic characters, then their own language, and then Haussa; sewing, and at a later stage sums. Boys and girls work and play together, but when girls reach a marriageable age they are taught by the Mallam's wives. There are no regular holidays, and children remain for some ten years without a break. When they leave the school the Mallam [875] receives a fee of 20,000 cowries, in addition to which there may or may not be complimentary presents given. The young scholar, on reaching home, goes to salute the Sarki and all elders, and receives a dash from each to celebrate the home-coming.

643 874 855 581 The same customs that apply to the commoner apply to the Chiefs and Emirs. His children are also sent to school, and he never keeps his first-born. In questions of marriage it is he who takes the first step, and he will often give his daughters in marriage to the merest talaka, and may even marry a peasant girl himself without incurring reproach.

642 The Emir of Bida keeps up an elaborate state. He sends food to all visitors to his capital and provides them with accommodation. He summons Chiefs to audiences, and holds a levee in the palace courtyard every Friday morning between 7 and 8 a.m., where all or any of his subjects assemble to salute him but he does not enter into conversation with anyone then.